

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 GABORO 00667 110958Z  
ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00  
/039 W

-----071200 121346Z /53

R 091147Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1748  
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN  
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA  
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA  
USMISSION GENEVA

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CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: SREF BC  
SUBJ: REFUGEES: VIRTUALLY ENTIRE FRANCISTOWN CAMP POPULATION  
MOVED TO SELEBI-PIKWE

REF: (A) GABORONE 0601, (B) GABORONE 0406

1. UNHCR DEPUTY RESREP MCCALLIN TOLD EMBOFFS MARCH 7 THAT VIRTUALLY ENTIRE REFUGEE POPULATION OF FRANCISTOWN CAMP HAS BEEN MOVED TO SELEBI-PIKWE CAMP. ACCORDING TO MCCALLIN, ONLY FORTY-FIVE (45) REFUGEES REMAIN AT FRANCISTOWN WHILE OVER 4,000 ARE NOW ACCOMMODATED AT SELEBI-PIKWE. ADDRESSEES WILL RECALL THAT, AS LATE AS FEB 27, MORE THAN 2,000 REFUGEES WERE HOUSED AT FRANCISTOWN (REF A). MCCALLIN TOLD US THAT UNHCR RENTED TRUCKS TO TRANSFER REFUGEES IN ORDER TO RELIEVE OVERCROWDING AND DISMAL CONDITIONS AT FRANCISTOWN.

2. EMBOFFS INQUIRED WHETHER THIS UNUSUALLY LARGE TRANSFER  
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OF REFUGEES WITHIN BOTSWANA DID NOT SIMPLY SHIFT PROBLEMS FROM FRANCISTOWN TO SELEBI-PIKWE. MCCALLIN AGREED THAT SELEBI-PIKWE CAMP IS NOW OVERCROWDED, BUT HE SEEMED CONFIDENT THAT REFUGEES WOULD BE BETTER OFF THERE BECAUSE OF BETTER PHYSICAL FEATURES AND MORE ENERGETIC AND EFFECTIVE LOCAL CAMP ADMINISTRATORS.

3. COMMENT: CURRENT POPULATION OF FRANCISTOWN CAMP IS PROBABLY SMALLER THAN AT ANY POINT SINCE IT OPENED IN 1975. NUMBER OF REFUGEES WILL RISE WITH NEW ARRIVALS, BUT CAMP POPULATION WILL PROBABLY NOT APPROACH CAPACITY FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. WE BELIEVE UNHCR ACTED BECAUSE OF MOUNTING PRESSURE ON IT TO DO SOMETHING TO ALLEVIATE WHAT RECENT AFRICARE DELEGATION CHIEF CHARLES WILLIAMS CALLED "HUMAN CESSPOOL" AT FRANCISTOWN. FACED WITH NECESSITY TO DO SOMETHING AND UNABLE TO MOUNT AIR-LIFT TO ZAMBIA BECAUSE OF CONTINUED DELAYS IN RECEIVING ZAMBIAN PERMISSION, UNHCR CHOSE TO VIRTUALLY EMPTY FRANCISTOWN CAMP AND SHIFT BURDEN TO BETTER-PREPARED SELEBI-PIKWE. SHIFT OF REFUGEES TO SELEBI-PUKWE ALSO PRE-POSITIONS THEM FOR AIRLIFT TO ZAMBIA IF PERMISSION FOR THAT OPERATION IS FINALLY RECEIVED.

4. MASS TRANSFER OF REFUGEES SHOULD PLEASE GOB OFFICIALS WHO HAVE ALWAYS REGARDED FRANCISTOWN CAMP AS ADMINISTRATIVE AND SECURITY LIABILITY. WE DO NOT, HOWEVER, BELIEVE THAT EITHER GOB OR UNHCR IS CONTEMPLATING CLOSING OF FRANCISTOWN CAMP, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF RECENTLY ANNOUNCED PLANS TO MAKE IT MORE HABITABLE BY BUILDING WAREHOUSES, NEW BARRACKS, CLINICS AND KITCHEN (REF B).  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** REFUGEE CAMPS, POPULATION MOVEMENTS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 09 mar 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
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**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
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**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
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**Subject:** REFUGEES: VIRTUALLY ENTIRE FRANCISTOWN CAMP POPULATION MOVED TO SELEBI-PIKWE  
**TAGS:** SREF, BC  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014